

REMARKS

Introduction

The present application includes claims 1-21, 28-33, and 36-52. With this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 19, 38, and 51 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and amended claims 36, 39, 40, 47, 52, and 53. As such, claims 1-18, 20, 21, 28-33, and 36, 37, 39-50, and 52-54 are currently pending in this application.

Allowed Claims

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 1-10, 20-21, and 44-46 in the present application.

Claim Objections

Claims 14-15, 30-33, 38-39, 43, 47 and 51-54 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With this Amendment, Applicants have rewritten claims 47 and 53 in independent claim. The presentation of claims 47 and 53 in independent form is merely a cosmetic change to original claims 47 and 53 and does not narrow the original scope of claims 47 and 53, respectively. Claim 54 is amended to depend from claim 53. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 47, 53 and 54 are in condition for allowance.

Claim rejections

Claims 11-13, 16-18 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,140,105 to Belinski (hereinafter “Belinski”). Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,900,065 to Houck (hereinafter “Houck”). Claims 28-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,754,993 to Kraynick (hereinafter “Kraynick”). Claims 40-42 and 48-50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,886,466 to Doherty (hereinafter “Doherty”).

§ 102(b) – Belinski

Belinski fails to teach or suggest a combination including “a pneumatic coupling configured to couple the first pneumatic component to the second pneumatic component, the

pneumatic coupling being configured to move from a first position with the first and second components fluidly coupled to permit the flow of pressurized air...and a second position with...components fluidly uncoupled **to permit the flow of pressurized air from the first pneumatic component to a location external...**" as required by claim 11 (emphasis added). There is no disclosure in Belinski stating the coupling may be released under pressure. There is no teaching in Belinski that it is safe to release the coupling under pressure. Thus, claim 11 believed to be in condition for allowance.

Additionally, Belinski fails to teach or suggest a combination wherein "the second pneumatic component being **restrained from moving beyond a predetermined distance from the first pneumatic component** when the pneumatic coupling is **in the second position**" as required by claim 11 (emphasis added). There is no disclosure in Belinski of a position where handles 26 are in the open position and hooks 21 are still connected. Hooks 21 are rigid and separate when handles 26 are placed in the open position. Even if you assume that the hooks are not automatically released, which is not disclosed in Belinski, when handles 26 are placed in the open position they will release and not be held to a predetermined distance because first pneumatic component is still pressurized. For these reasons, claim 11 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 12-13 depend from claim 11. Removal of the rejections of claims 11-13 is respectfully requested.

Belinski fails to teach or suggest a combination including "a two-stage pneumatic coupling configured to move between a first coupled position, a second coupled position, and a third uncoupled position..." as required by claim 16. As discussed above, Belinski fails to teach a defined second position. Belinski only discloses a coupling having a coupled position with handles 26 closed and hooks 21 connected and an uncoupled position with handles 26 open and hooks 21 released. There is simply no support for the examiner's statement that a second position exists "where hooks 21 are connected and handles 26 in the open position." For these reasons, claim 16 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 17-18 depend from claim 16. Removal of the rejections of claims 16-18 is respectfully requested.

With this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claim 38, amended claim 36 to include the limitations of dependent claim 38, and amended the dependence of claim 39 to amended claim 36. Claim 38 was objected to by the examiner. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claim 36 and 37 under § 102(b) are now moot.

§ 102(b) – Houck

With this Amendment, Applicants have cancelled claim 19 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. As such, Applicants respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 19 under § 102(b) is now moot.

§ 102(b) – Kraynick

Kraynick fails to teach or suggest a combination including a “housing including a housing body and a plurality of **parallel ribs** extending substantially across the housing body to strengthen the housing, the plurality of parallel ribs defining a plurality of grooves therebetween” as required by claim 28 (emphasis added). The ribs in Kraynick are not parallel as required by the language of claim 28. Thus, claim 28 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Additionally, Kraynick states “reinforcing ribs 48 are provided to support tubes 36 and facilitate the molding of male member 32. Reinforcing ribs 48 provide additional support for tubes 36 and prevent damage to tubes 36 when rough handling occurs during manufacture, storage or assembly...” (see Kraylick, Col. 7 ll. 33-37). The ribs in Kraynick are provided to support tubes 36 and not to strengthen the housing 32. The ribs in the present invention strengthen the housing. For these reasons, claim 28 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 29 depends from claim 28. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

§ 102(b) – Doherty

With this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claim 51, amended claim 40 to include the limitations of dependent claim 51, and amended the dependence of claim 52 to amended claim 40. Claim 51 was objected to by the examiner. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claim 40-42 and 48-50 under § 102(b) are now moot.

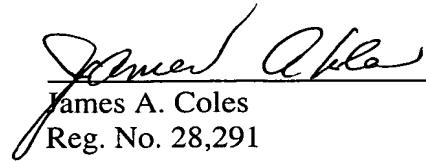
Final Remarks

Claims 1-18, 20, 21, 28-33, and 36, 37, 39-50, and 52-54 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully requested.

If necessary, Applicants request that this Response be considered a request for an extension of time for a time appropriate for the response to be timely filed. Applicants request that any required fees needed beyond those submitted with this Response be charged to the account of Bose McKinney & Evans LLP, Deposit Account Number 02-3223.

Respectfully submitted,

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